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September 28, 2011

The Honorable Michele Bachmann
U.S. House of Representatives
103 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

RE: Heartbeat Informed Consent Act

Dear Representative Bachmann:

The National Right to Life Committee (NRLC) is pleased to endorse your Heartbeat Informed Consent Act, which will ensure that a pregnant mother seeking an abortion will have a real opportunity to see the heartbeat of her unborn child, and in some cases to hear the heartbeat as well, before completing the process of consent to an abortion.

Far too many women have been told that they were aborting a "blob of tissue," only to learn later that the unborn child already had a beating heart and was very much alive. Discovering this truth, only subsequent to an abortion, can have lasting adverse psychological consequences for the mother.

The Heartbeat Informed Consent Act requires that, prior to an abortion, an ultrasound must be performed, the ultrasound image displayed for the mother, and the unborn child's heartbeat (if visible) described to the mother. Displaying the unborn child's heartbeat so that the mother herself (and not just the ultrasound technician) can see it is an important part of informed consent. In addition, if the pregnancy is past a certain point, the technician must make the heartbeat audible using a handheld Doppler fetal monitor.

We commend you for working to ensure that the technology that allows us to see and hear an unborn child's heartbeat is used to benefit women by making them more fully informed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Douglas Johnson'.

Douglas Johnson
Legislative Director

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Susan T. Muskett'.

Susan T. Muskett, J.D.
Senior Legislative Counsel